



# Impaired Driving Prevention Month

## Plan of the Week Notes

### Week 1

**Make safe choices about drinking and driving during the holiday season to avoid negative outcomes.** Holiday parties and family gatherings are events that many look forward to at the end of the year, but these environments may increase the risk for Sailors and Marines to engage in unhealthy alcohol behavior. You may think that having [a few drinks](#) to take the edge off isn't enough to cause you to make bad decisions behind the wheel. But it only takes one time to hurt yourself, others, or your career. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) state that alcohol-impaired drivers cause one death every 51 minutes.<sup>1</sup> The CDC also confirms that car crashes are the leading cause of death for people ages 5 to 34, and 1 in 3 of all crash deaths involves a drunk driver.<sup>2</sup> [You can be part of the solution.](#)

- Make arrangements to have a non-drinking designated driver.
- Have a family member or friend pick you up.
- Call a taxi. Program the number into your phone so you have it readily available when needed.
- Plan to stay overnight.

### Week 2

**Check medications you take to see how they react with alcohol.** Are you brewing a recipe for disaster without realizing it? [Alcohol and medicines may create a harmful reaction](#) even if they are not taken at the exact same time. When mixed with alcohol, over-the-counter cold medicine can intensify drowsiness and ibuprofen can create a rapid heartbeat in some people.<sup>3</sup> Many medications have more than one ingredient that can react with alcohol, so know the facts about your medications and whether it is safe to consume alcohol while you take these medications. Check with your pharmacist or health care provider about mixing alcohol with medicines and consult the [National Institutes of Health's Guide to Harmful Interactions.](#)

### Week 3

**Buzzed driving is drunk driving - don't wait until you've had a few drinks to decide how you're getting home this holiday season.** The end of year holiday season is reason for celebration. But



don't let your holiday plans keep you from making [safe decisions about drinking and driving](#). In 2013, 733 people lost their lives as a result of drunk-driving-related crashes during the month of December alone.<sup>4</sup> If someone you know is drinking, do not let that person get behind the wheel. If you plan on drinking, [decide how you will get home before you start drinking](#).

## Week 4

**End your year on a high note by drinking responsibly.** [Planning ahead](#) is key to making safe and healthy decisions about consuming alcohol during the holiday season. Nearly one in three crash deaths involves an alcohol-impaired driver.<sup>2</sup> Many people mistakenly think that you can calculate your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) [based upon how many drinks you've consumed](#). BAC is actually based upon a number of factors including body weight, amount of food eaten, and alcohol content.<sup>4</sup> A blood alcohol concentration (BAC) as low as .02% can create a loss of judgment and trouble multitasking, and a BAC of .05% impairs coordination, tracking moving objects visually, and steering a vehicle.<sup>5</sup> Even drinking one or two drinks can have an effect on your ability to judge and react.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Impaired Driving. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired\\_driving/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/index.html). Updated 13 January 2015. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Impaired Driving: Get the Facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[http://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/Impaired\\_Driving/impaired-driv\\_factsheet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/Impaired_Driving/impaired-driv_factsheet.html). Updated 19 May 2015. Updated 15 October 2013. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>3</sup> National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Harmful Interactions.

<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Medicine/medicine.htm>. Published 2003. Revised 2014. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>4</sup> 2015 Pre-Holiday Campaign Sample Talking Points Social Norming Version. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/newtsm/id-holidays/2015/11759a-PreHolidayBuzzed-2015-FactSheet.doc>. Updated 2015. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Effects of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired\\_driving/bac.html](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/bac.html). Updated 17 August 2015. Accessed October 2015.